

**Greetings: Oriire fun owo!** (Good Tidings to you!)

I'm Baba Umar, Babalawo of Ile Awo Orisa, (the House of the Mysteries of the Orisa). Welcome to this next video in our series of reviews of our Blog Post starting back in 2016.

When I first addressed this topic back in March 2016, I hadn't really considered the origin or antecedents of the question itself, "**What is in a Name?**" As it turns out the question itself is worthy of consideration. According to Shakespeare, in his play *Romeo and Juliet*, "**The name of a thing does not matter as much as the quality of the thing.**" Shakespeare has Juliet pose this very question, "*What's in a name?*"

We've probably all heard the statement, "*That which we call a rose/By any other name would smell as sweet.*" Or, stated differently, "*A rose by any other name is still a rose!*" **These statements would suggest that names themselves do not hold worth, nor consequential meaning, and they simply act as labels to distinguish one thing or person from another.**

Current research however, suggest that this is not correct and that **our names may have a greater influence on our lives than suggested in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.**

Some researchers have found an unusual association between the **name** of a person and his/her **personality**. **For example**, indications are that people with the same names seem to have similar personalities. This observation seems to suggest that **our names may actually play a part in shaping our personalities**. And some researchers and observers theorize that one's **name can affect one's ability to succeed**. This research would suggest that **one's name might influence how we feel about ourselves, positive or negative, strong or weak.**

Our **name is our most often repeated identifier**, and as such is a **powerful influence in our process of becoming**. It is also a kind of **descriptor that allows people to make quick judgments and assumptions about us** since in many cases, our names tie us to a particular **ethnic group, history, or cultural legacy**. While we can understand the harm of assumptions, for the human mind **our name is often a fast way for someone to categorize, rightly or wrongly, a lot of information in a short amount of time.**

In the **second Sura of the Holy Quran**, upon the creation of Adam, one of the ways *Allah* addressed the doubt of the angels about the authority He, *Allah*, was going to give to His new creature was to say, "**O Adam, tell them Their names.**" The verse goes on to say, "**When he had told them (their names), Allah said, "Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and I know what ye reveal and what ye conceal?"**" (Holy Qur'an Surah 2, Verse 33).

This verse seems to suggest that **the ability to name a thing, and to know the names of things, is no small matter**. It is also worth noting, that the Arabic word translated as '**names**' (*asma, ism*) in the *Abdullah Yusuf Ali* translation of the Holy Qur'an can also be translated as '**attribute**' or '**nature**' according to the *Malik Ghulam Farid*, or *Muhammad Ali* translations.

**The point here is that the names that we are given, or that we assign to ourselves, matter, and can both describe our nature and shape our attributes.**

The **Honorable Elijah Muhammad** told his followers in the Nation of Islam that they should **abandon the names assigned by their European slave masters**. This message was really intended for all descendants of the African slave trade.

Considering what I've previously stated about the power of a name, his injunction makes sense. Why not take a name that connects you to something that you can be proud of, something that represents or identifies your heritage or lineage, rather than a name that was given to you to indicate that you were the property of someone who stole you from your homeland and claimed ownership over you.

This of course was/is **no easy thing** to do since those '**slave names**' had/have been passed down as family names from one generation to the next. For many members of the Nation of Islam, and others who simply agreed with the philosophy, **changing their names created friction and dissension within the family**.

In the **Ifa Spiritual Tradition of Ancestor and Orisa Worship** there is an abundance of significance given to the naming of a child or person. It involves the casting of divination in order to determine the will of the person's *Ori* and their chosen *destiny* in life. **From the Ifa perspective, your name should act**

as a constant reminder of who you are in the world and why you chose to come.

- *What is it that you intended to accomplish in the world?*
- *How did you intend to serve?*
- *What gifts and talents did you intend to share with those whom you came to serve?*
- *What is your place and role in your family and community?*

**Here a just a few Ifa names as an example:**

*Ayokunumi: I am overwhelmed with wealth*

*Eyioriwaase: Ori destiny has a job to do*

*Ifabanke: Ifa will take good care of her*

*Ifakemi: Ifa blessed me*

*Ifarounbi: Ifa begets an only child*

*Ifasadun: Ifa sprouts joy or honey*

*Ifaturotimi: Ifa is solidly with me*

*Ifawuyi: Ifa is venerated, honorable, charming and / or captivating*

*Jingin: Elegance*

*Winlawe: Beauty*

Another important aspect of your name is that **names are words that resonate energetic vibrations**, and that resonance can be positive or negative.

As I stated in the original Blog Post back in **March 2016**, *“I hope you can remember the sound of love in the voice of people who called to you in your childhood and youth. There are a host of feelings and attitudes that can travel on the voice. Some good and some bad! The positive energy vibrations associated with the sounds of respect, confidence, trust, faith, support, and encouragement carry a special quality of Ase (spiritual energy, power) that affects each of us in very powerful ways.*

***When those sounds and expressions are attached to our names we are empowered by their Ase and we come to respect, trust, and have faith and confidence in ourselves. We begin to feel more confident. We become trustworthy and reliable. We learn that we can get up after a fall because we have been encouraged to do so and can call upon those energetic vibrations associated with our name.”***

**Our names become associated with all of these wonderful vibrations, and our *Ase Ami* (energy signature) is energized when we hear our name called.** Of course the opposite is also true, but lets not dwell too much on that aspect.

If your name was called with a host of **negative energy vibrations** you already know that some of that energy is attached to the sound of your name even to this day. But I suspect and hope that you have managed to call enough love and **positive energy vibrations** into your life that the energy of the past is no longer attached, at least not to your name. If it is, know that **you have the authority to change you name to something that truly resonates with you, your personality, and your destiny.**

Family, friends, co-workers, employers, and neighbors may all call you by various names or nicknames and each name elicits a slight shift in your *Ase Ami* (Energy Signature).

The point here is that **when we call the name of a thing we affect the reality of the thing.**

**This notion is well understood in most religious and spiritual traditions where the names of the God and Spiritual Beings should not be spoken in vain or with disrespect.**

In some traditions, as in *Ifa*, special days are set-aside for the entire community to come together and pay homage to an important deity by calling their name, singing their homage songs, and feeding them during a community feast. **These activities nurture cohesiveness in the community and fill the members with the *Ase* associated with the name of that particular spiritual entity.** There is another important aspect to a name, especially the names of spiritual beings.

We have discussed in my writings the idea that **when two or more entities interact, they in turn create (generate) a Quantum Entity that is a manifestation of the integration of their individual energy fields** (Quantum Entanglement). We have also suggested that there is a vibrational frequency or energetic membrane that separates the physical world and the spiritual world.

In order to penetrate that membrane we must open a pathway, doorway, or vortex through that membrane. In *Ifa* we accomplish that by calling the name

of the *Orisa* and Ancestors we wish to connect with, and by singing or reciting ***Oriki*** (Praise songs). **It is the Name of the thing that allows you to make the connection.**

**When your name is called it brings you to attention. When the names of *Orisa* and *Egun* are called they also are moved.** This is another reason why it is important to remember the Daily Ifa Calendar so that you can homage the *Orisa* on their special days.

But more importantly, you should call your guardian *Orisa*'s names out loud and often because when you do, **you give power to the Quantum Entity that you share with your *Orisa***, you strengthen the connection you share, and because you keep the pathway, doorway, or vortex between the material world and the Spiritual World open to you.